

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. – 18. **(Canceled)**

19. **(Original)** An outboard motor comprising:

an internal combustion engine configured to provide thrust to propel a watercraft and having an alternator configured to produce an operating rail voltage within a rail voltage range when the internal combustion engine is running;

a fuel pump having a rated maximum voltage that is below the rail voltage range, wherein the fuel pump is configured to supply fuel to the internal combustion engine; and

a control unit having a control circuit to control the fuel pump to operate at a rail voltage that exceeds the rated maximum voltage.

20. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 further comprising a DC energy source connected to condition power from the alternator to provide DC power to the fuel pump at a voltage within the rail voltage range that exceeds the rated maximum voltage.

21. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 20 wherein the rail voltage range is from 12 volts to 60 volts.

22. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 20 wherein the DC energy source includes a switching regulator constructed to convert AC power generated by the alternator to DC power and input the DC power to the fuel pump at a voltage that exceeds 12 volts.

23. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 22 wherein the switching regulator is further configured to provide DC power to the fuel pump at a voltage of 30 volts.

24. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the control circuit is further configured to control the fuel pump to be operable at variable voltages.
25. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 further comprising a fuel pump drive circuit connected to the fuel pump and configured to control fuel pump operation based on input received from the control unit.
26. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 26 wherein the control circuit is further configured to pulse width modulate the fuel pump drive circuit.
27. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 26 wherein the control circuit is further configured to pulse width modulate the fuel pump drive circuit to maintain pump operation at approximately 3 amperes.
28. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 26 wherein the control circuit is further configured to pulse width modulate the fuel pump drive circuit at 10 kHz.
29. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the internal combustion engine is a two-cycle engine.
30. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the internal combustion engine is a rope-start engine.

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